15 MINUTES

PHOTO BY ANDRE BYIK

Head space

Bruce Bussard got into the head shop business in 1983 when he was a junior in high school, selling pipes out of his mother's bead and silver store in Redding. Today, Bussard, who lives in Anderson, owns a trio of shops in Redding, Red Bluff and Chico called The Darkside. He carries a variety of tobacco and cannabis pipes, as well as vaping supplies, skateboard equipment and other gifts. "We call it 'Skates and Vapes' quite often," Bussard told the CN&R, adding that he's been called "the Walmart of my industry" because of the pricing and diversity of his merchandise. Bussard's Chico location, which opened a couple of months ago at 245 Walnut St., is spacious at 3.500 square feet and well-lit. Rows of skateboard decks line the back wall, and Bussard and store Manager Roxy Hoofard were behind the counter during a recent visit.

What can people expect at the store?

Hoofard: Everybody walks in and says we have everything. Bussard: Yeah. And they like that we're large and open, because most people go into head shops and they're kind of small, dark and very crowded. We sell a lot of skateboard stuff. This is a big skate community. We probably sell more skate stuff than we do any other product, followed by vapes and then pipes When it comes to our glass, we buy from a lot of local blowers, and we buy pipes



from all over the United States.

Have the changing politics of marijuana helped business?

Bussard: No, it's actually made business tougher. I used to be virtually the only shop for years and years and years. And now even in this town there's 10 to 15 head shops. A lot of people have gone into this industry, which 20 years ago would have never [been] done ... because of the condemnation that went along with head shops.

So, why "Darkside"?

Bussard: A lot of people think it's connected to Star Wars, and it's not. When I first started this, I looked at it as, everybody has a dark side. Everybody. It doesn't matter whether you're the pope, the little old lady next door—you.

Everybody's got a side to them they don't want the public to know. This used to be something that—people would come and buy, but they wouldn't share with the neighbors the fact that they smoked pot. So, it was their dark side.

What's your dark side, Bruce?

Bussard: What's my dark side? I don't know. I'm pretty open, and I don't care what people know about me. I'll tell them anything. If you have a question, I'll answer it. I have no shame. No vanity. I don't care. So, I don't know. Hoofard: I think you'd rather hide from people, but here you are, not hiding from people. So, I mean, there's that. Kind of a solitary creature.

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THE GOODS

Green market, community coffee



by **Meredith J. Cooper**

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It's officially summer! I can't believe it's already almost July and I finally had a free hour to spare last week to peruse the booths and chat with folks at the **Thursday Night Market**. There was an eclectic mix of booths, including a number of newcomers, which was exciting to see.

The evening was gorgeous, not too hot, with a slight breeze—perfect for a deliciously spiced horchata from **La Flor de Michoacán Paletería y Neveria**. The flavor was great, and I love that they don't fill the cup with a ton of ice (or any at all), so you definitely get your four bucks' worth.

I'd had a huge lunch, so I didn't partake in any of the wonderful-smelling food offerings, but I was happy to see **Café Petra** peddling shwarma and other goodies, since the restaurant has been closed for several months now following a fire in the kitchen.

I also noticed my favorite Filipino foodies—Inday's—were there, as always, and they are offering something new: wooden sporks, to replace the planet-killing plastic kind. In fact, the restaurant/mobile kitchen has made several moves to be more green. In addition to wooden utensils for to-go orders, owners John and Inday Geiger have eliminated plastic straws and styrofoam packaging, in favor of paper products. And at the restaurant (at 1043 W. Eighth St.), they've put up 48 solar panels, which John tells me should offset their power needs. Right on!

TINCTURES AND BALMS One booth that was new to me was Serenity CBD. I chatted with one of the reps for a few minutes and he informed me that the local business has no storefront at the moment, but is starting out at the Thursday Night Market. They use all organic ingredients, including essential oils, in their tincture, topical balm and topical roller. I've found some relief from CBD lotions on sore muscles and other aches, so it's cool to see more locals getting into this market. If you're out and about, Serenity CBD also is sold at Chico Natural Foods, Dragon Tobacco, New Earth Market and S&S Natural Foods. Go to serenitycbd.com for more info.

ROASTING TIME While the folks over at **Stoble Coffee** prepare their cafe/co-working space by **Bank of America** in downtown Chico, they've decided to go ahead and start roasting. I took the opportunity to chat with one of the owners, **Matt Johnston**, who said he and his wife, **Natalie**, moved here specifically to open Stoble with their best friends, **Matt and Lauren Thiede**.

Johnston explained the concept of the co-working space: It'll be similar to **ChicoStart**—with shared office and conference spaces, kitchen, equipment, etc.—but with a wider variety of membership options. Also, their focus is on "anybody who appreciates community and wants to work around others and build relationships."

The space is slated to open next year—and the designs Johnston sent me look rad. In the meantime, check out the "coffee made for community" at stoblecoffee.com.



